

# Trilby van Bree – “You have to think and work more collaboratively”



Trilby van Bree worked her way up through the ranks of the New Zealand Blood Service using past experience to step up to new roles – but to take on the top role she needed a qualification to endorse her experience. This is her story.

Having worked for the New Zealand Blood Service (NZBS) for 13 years, there have been ample opportunities for me to extend myself into different roles – from a laboratory technician, logistics team leader, project officer, logistics support officer to national manager of logistics.

The transformation from being a ‘labbie’ to a national manager was almost a default process, and to be honest I did not set out to become or be seen as an expert in logistics and supply chain management within a health sector organisation.

During 2004, NZBS recognised the importance of logistics within its supply chain and appointed my predecessor at that time, a logistician, to drive this area forward. When the occasion arose to apply for the national manager role, it was evident that although I had demonstrated my aptitude and I

had evolved through a number of roles, there was a key element that had to be overcome. To transition from a support role to the national logistics role I was required to gain the qualifications to endorse the move upwards.

### Foundation for learning

The CILT-UK Professional Diploma in Logistics and Transport, through the Logistics Training Group (LTG), provided the pathway to make this transition and I enrolled in late 2008. The compulsory core management module provided the foundation for the learning, and for me was a refresher from previous leadership education.

The compulsory supply chain module introduced the numerous supply chain concepts, methodologies and process improvement. The two elective modules enabled in-depth study in areas of the supply chain I was familiar with, or we could choose to expand our knowledge in an area that may be new to us, but was of interest.

The pinnacle of my learning was bringing together the knowledge I had gained to formulate and present a business case, which gave me the opportunity to

present a genuine work-based scenario that was of direct benefit to my company.

### Completing the picture

I completed the diploma in 2012, which included the elective modules of inventory and sourcing & procurement. My current role centres on inventory management of the NZBS blood supply, production planning, forecasting and managing both e-procurement and warehouse management systems. My training folders and learning assignments continue to be a valuable resource and point of reference for day-to-day activities as well as specific projects.

Although I am an advocate and acknowledge the importance of work-related experience in logistics (having spent several years working progressively in this area) it is equally important to ensure that an educational qualification completes the picture.

The professional diploma has equipped me to make a substantial impact in many areas in the

NZBS supply chain. This includes aligning the collection of whole blood (from volunteer donors) to meet the demands of our customers (the patients within the district health boards), forecasting red cell demand, establishing inventory stock levels, reducing expiry (within NZBS and the DHB sector), cold chain monitoring and compliance, development and validation of transportation packaging, as well as evaluation of supplier performance.

One of the biggest advancements I have made since graduation has been the shift towards applying a greater holistic approach towards achieving the desired strategic outcomes for NZBS. This has meant thinking and working more collaboratively and laterally across all aspects of NZBS operations.

*“The CILT-UK Professional Diploma in Logistics and Transport is offered in New Zealand by the Logistics Training Group; for further information, visit [www.ltg.co.nz](http://www.ltg.co.nz)”*

## An outstanding student

Walter Glass, the programme director at LTG, says Trilby was an exceptional student who consistently produced work of an excellent standard while facing many extraordinary challenges.

The main challenges were the Christchurch earthquakes and promotion within her company from a logistics support role to the national logistics manager. Her new role required her to work between Christchurch and Auckland and still manage family life.

“Trilby exceeded the timeframe for the top graduate award,” Walter says, “and so LTG decided the high quality of her work throughout the course should be recognised. As a result, a new award for ‘Extraordinary excellence during a course of study’ was created. This award will only be presented to a graduate whose work is of outstanding quality, but the graduate is ineligible for the traditional award.”

Walter says the New Zealand Organisation for Quality (NZOQ) was very impressed with Trilby’s determination and has also recognised her achievement. In conjunction with the LTG award, NZOQ presented Trilby with a complimentary voucher to undertake an NZOQ internal auditor course. The presentations took place at a meeting of the Southern Section of CILT NZ in Christchurch on 24 June 2014.

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